

C1  
means for selecting a subset of the plurality of audio data streams, wherein the selected subset of audio data streams includes streams of different data types;  
decoder modules for decoding different types of audio data;  
means for routing the selected subset of the plurality of audio data streams to the decoder modules based on the data types of the streams; and  
means for rendering the selected subset of audio data streams.

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28. (Amended) The conference system of claim 26:

wherein the selected subset of audio data streams includes a first audio data stream and a second audio data stream; and

wherein the system further comprises:

C2  
means for determining whether one or more of the first and second audio data streams is associated with an inactive conference participant; and  
means, responsive to determination of the inactive conference participant, for substituting a third audio data stream from a third conference participant, for at least the one of the first and second audio data streams associated with the inactive conference participant.

sub 18 29. (Amended) A conferencing method comprising:

receiving a plurality of audio data streams from a corresponding plurality of conference participants;

selecting a subset of the plurality of audio data streams, wherein the selected subset of audio data streams includes streams of different data types;

routing the selected subset of the plurality of audio data streams to decoder modules based on their data types; and

rendering the selected subset of audio data streams.

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